February 2006

Geneva Diary: Report from the GICHD

Ian Mansfield
GICHD

Follow this and additional works at: http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal

Part of the Defense and Security Studies Commons, Emergency and Disaster Management Commons, Other Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons, and the Peace and Conflict Studies Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: http://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol9/iss2/36

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for International Stabilization and Recovery at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction by an authorized editor of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact dc_admin@jmu.edu.
Mansfield: Geneva Diary: Report from the GICHD

The Study

A Study of Manual Mine Clearance

Manual mine clearance is the fundamental tenet of mine action and yet it has not been sufficiently analyzed. To that end, the GICHD, at the request of the United Nations Mine Action Service, commenced a detailed study into manual mine clearance in late 2003. The Study of Manual Mine Clearance sought to define a set of parameters that affect the efficiency of manual mine clearance and use it to develop benchmarks or planning figures for manual mine clearance (clearance rates, costs, etc.). The study also examined in detail the drills, techniques, equipment and procedures used for manual mine clearance, and considered the risk-management approach to the process of manual mine clearance. The study was developed in five specific areas and each section forms a stand-alone publication that complements the others.

- History, summary and conclusions
- Management of manual mine clearance
- Operational systems in manual mine clearance: case studies and empirical trials
- Risk assessment and risk management of mined areas
- Costs of manual mine clearance

The study found today’s “humanitarian demining” is much safer than the major military-supervised approach when setting priorities in situations where clearance resources are limited.

Operational systems in manual mine clearance:

The International Mine Action Standards on mine-detecting dogs have been reviewed and the new draft document of dogs for mine detection, The International Mine Action Standards Web site (www.mineactionstandards.org). A study of MED operations, consisting of four case studies, is available on the GICHD Web site, along with three new videos on the training of MEDs. Guidebooks on the training of dogs and the use of Remote Explosive Scent Tracing have also been published.

The development of the IMAS is undertaken by the GICHD on behalf of UNMAS. In 2005, 32 of the existing 38 IMAS were reviewed and endorsed by the IMAS Review Board, which met in September. The latest IMAS are always posted on the Standards Web site, however, the GICHD has issued a new compact disc (IMAS 2005) and also a revised edition of the easy-to-use Guide to IMAS. The publications can be ordered for free through the GICHD Web site (see contact information).

See "Reference and Endnotes," page 108

Developments in UNMAS-managed Programs

Afghanistan. Field operations were maintained throughout October 2005 for most of the country, as continued work with the government of Afghanistan on the issue of transition, including internal analysis and planning. Ongoing capacity building continued in areas including administration and finance. Some operations were suspended for a short time during the election process in late September, but these were resumed immediately after its conclusion. A number of attacks on mine action personnel occurred, including a direct targeting of HALO Trust personnel working on munitions destruction in the southwest. Several HALO personnel were killed during a separate traffic accident on their way to work near Bagram.

Cypus. The clearance program in the buffer zone continued, with additional funding from the European Union that will carry the program into 2006. Turkey’s agreement to the demining program had allowed Phase II of the program focusing on minefields of Turkish and unknown origin in the buffer zone to commence with clearance teams operating in three Turkish minefields. In October, the teams completed clearance of two of those minefields. Since the start of Phase II operations, 57,296 square meters (14 acres) of land have been cleared and handed over.

Eritrea/Ethiopia. In October, the Eritrean government banned the U.N. Mission in Eritrea and Eritrea from flying helicopters in Eritrean airspace. This ban led to mine clearance operations being suspended due to a lack of adequate casualty evacuation coverage. Survey, marking, mine risk education and training activities continued. The suspension of UNMEE demining brought about a halt to the only demining occurring in Eritrea, as the national program was suspended in April due to the government’s confiscation of mine action program vehicles and a subsequent request by the Eritrean Demining Authority for UNDP to terminate the contracts of most UNDP technical advisors. Prior to the ban on helicopter flights in Eritrea, on Oct. 1, 2005, a civilian bus in Sector West hit a newly laid anti-tank mine. One passenger was killed, and 19 others were injured. After conducting an investigation into the accident, the Mine Action Coordination Centre instructed the route clearance contractor to conduct checks on all roads in the area, just prior to the suspension of operations. The MACC also issued a revised mine/UXO threat assessment for the mission area, as well as a new travel advisory.

Sudan. On Oct. 31, 2005, a Foundation Suisse de Démontage mine clearance team worked with the World Food Program’s road reconstruction and rehabilitation program was embarked on Juba-Nimule road in southern Sudan, resulting in the deaths of two ESD colleagues (one international, one national staff) and injuries to two Sudanese soldiers. The United Nations has suspended all operations around the area and is evaluating the security situation. The U.N. Mine Action Office concluded a pre-deployment visit to the Kenyan military demining company to be sent to Wau, allowing the company to conduct manual demining activities in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards and granting immediate deployment. UNMAS conducted a training visit for the Egyptian military company to be deployed to Kadugli, and the company was successfully trained and accredited according to IMAS.

Update from UNDP

Angola. UNDP hosted a preparatory mission to provide support to the governmental operator INAD (National Demining Institute for Angola). After two rounds of consultation, a three-year project was proposed, formulated with technical assistance at the headquarters and training school to obtain increased management and administrative capacity and enhance technical capacity of INAD personnel, as well as purchasing and training equipment for seven INAD demining brigades. Operations have been suspended since May on the Landmine Impact Survey due to a lack of funding from the Survey Action Centre. The National Commission Governing Mine Action has since assumed responsibility for the ongoing management and completion of the LIS in consultation with SAC. Eleven of 18 provinces have now been completed. Three further provinces were scheduled to be completed by 2005 year-end and a project to complete two further provinces by October 2006 has just started.

Chad. Two High Commission for National Demining mine risk education teams carried out MRE activities in the north (Faya Largu and Fada) and in the refugee camps in the east. Operations in Fada finally started after being postponed for one month due to financial difficulties and a mine accident in September. A key challenge is the post of adviser in information systems and technology and databases remains vacant, and this position has not been filled.
Endnotes


2. One square metre is approximately equivalent to 1.2 square yards.

Mine Action Support Group Update, October 2005 [page 85]

Endnotes


2. Editor's Note: Some countries and mine action organizations are using the term "mine free," while others are using the term "mine safe" or "impact free." "Mine free" connotes a condition where all landmines have been cleared, whereas the terms "mine safe" and "impact free" refer to the condition in which landmines no longer pose a credible threat to a community or country.

LBC System Allows Remote Disposal, Barlhold [page 89]

Endnotes

1. Pass through.

How Deminer Position Contributes to Injury, Jetté, Dionne, Maach, Makris, Ceh and Bergeron [page 93]

Endnotes


20. 1 centimetre equals approximately 0.4 inches.

21. Fractured sand used in this study was provided by explosive forces, with silica dust as the main by-product of this process.

22. SAE J211 refers to the SAE Recommended Practice J211, Instrumentation for Impact Tests (MAEPS). It provides standards for the performance of equipment in impact tests.


27. 1 g = 9.8 m/s.

Rats to the Rescue: Results of the First Tests on a Real Minefield, Verhagen, F. Weetjens, K. Turner and Williams [page 100]

Endnotes


13. In g, 9.8 m/s².

8. Free" connotes a condition where all landmines have been cleared, whereas the terms "mine safe" and "impact free" refer to the condition in which landmines no longer pose a credible threat to a community or country.